TESTIMONY OF

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Good afternoon and thank you, Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, for the invitation to speak to you today.

I am the Chief Information Officer for the Department of Justice. I have held this position since April 2002. My testimony today will describe efforts the Department of Justice has undertaken since September 11, 2001, to improve interoperable wireless communication within the Department of Justice, as well as between the Department and our law enforcement partners in other federal, state and local agencies. I will focus particular attention to the Integrated Wireless Network (IWN) program, which is a program that my office manages.

Interagency communications is a priority issue for the Department of Justice and we recognize that such capability is also a top priority for the public safety community at large. DOJ's ability to protect this country and stop crime (including terrorism) is heavily dependent on working closely with other federal, state, tribal and local agencies. Such working relationships cannot be achieved unless we can interconnect

agency communications systems. Similarly, we consistently hear this same message from law enforcement partners in other federal agencies as well as at the state, tribal and local level. Indeed, the need for interagency communications has been widely recognized among the law enforcement community for at least two decades. The terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, and the subsequent analysis of what occurred during and in response to the attacks, highlighted in a very public way the communication deficits facing the country as a whole and the law enforcement and homeland security communities in particular.

Although most major metropolitan areas have some basic capability to link agency communications systems together to communicate in emergency situations, much of the country's existing capabilities are limited and do not meet the requirements for all circumstances. Further, most of the nation's interoperability capabilities exist only in our major cities. Much of the non-urban areas of the country have little interagency communications capabilities. In addition, events such as Hurricane Katrina highlight the fact that most of our public safety wireless communications systems (federal, state and local) are highly dependent on commercial or public infrastructure (e.g., electric utilities, telecommunications services, etc.). When these core infrastructure systems fail or are overwhelmed – as was the case during Hurricane Katrina – the agency communication systems are badly degraded or fail as well.

The Department of Justice is committed to supporting the improvement of interagency communications among the law enforcement community. DOJ has several ongoing programs that are designed to address particular aspects of the communications interoperability issue. The one I want to focus on today is the Integrated Wireless Network Program, an initiative to improve federal tactical law enforcement and homeland security communications capabilities. However, before I talk about IWN in detail, I first want to stress that the Department's efforts are not one-dimensional – in addition to addressing specific DOJ communications requirements through IWN, the Department also has contributed to addressing communications issues at the state and local level too.

Through the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) program, DOJ awarded $150 million in grants in 2003 and 2004, to 37 jurisdictions to improve public safety interoperability. The projects funded by COPS include voice interoperability and data information sharing to large and small population centers across the nation. Earlier this month, COPS awarded another $92 million to 26 localities to address public safety interoperability. Through the Communications Technology (CommTech) Program, the National Institute of Justice has granted over $90 million to practitioners, universities, industry standards bodies and vendors in order to develop interoperability solutions for state and local law enforcement. CommTech efforts span five different disciplines: research and development, integrated product test & evaluation, pilot programs, standards development, and outreach and technical assistance. Finally, as an initial step in the development of the IWN, DOJ has partnered with state and local officials in 25

cities across the country to augment or implement multi-agency emergency communications capabilities. This effort – which we call our 25 Cities Interoperability Program – has sought to achieve interoperable communications by connecting existing federal, state and local agency systems together. DOJ has made a concerted effort to coordinate across each of these three initiatives, and also with the SAFECOM program managed by the Department of Homeland Security.

I now want to focus on the Integrated Wireless Network (IWN) program. IWN is a partnership between DOJ and the Departments of Homeland Security and the Treasury to implement a consolidated nation-wide communications system in support of the federal agents and officers engaged in the conduct of the law enforcement and homeland defense missions of the three Departments. The scope of the IWN is significant. When fully implemented, IWN will support approximately 80,000 federal agents and officers in all 50 states and the U.S. territories. Based on the government's preliminary engineering estimates, the IWN will require installation of communications infrastructure at approximately 2,500 locations around the country.

The IWN will replace the antiquated and functionally limited existing systems currently supporting federal agencies including the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Drug Enforcement Administration, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, U.S. Marshals Service, U.S. Secret Service, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, and U.S. Customs and Border Protection. In doing so, the

IWN will address federal agency requirements to communicate across agencies, and with state and local law enforcement partners. The IWN also will facilitate federal use of emerging communications technology (such as Voice over Internet Protocol, and wireless streaming video). Finally, IWN will allow DOJ, DHS and Treasury to address these requirements in the most resource-efficient means possible, thus reducing the dollars, staff time and radio spectrum needed to meet federal agency communications requirements.

The genesis of the IWN program was a mandate from the Department of Commerce, National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), to cut in half the amount of radio spectrum used by federal agencies for each land mobile radio channel [For reference, see 47 U.S.C. 903(d).]. Land mobile radio is the technology most law enforcement and public safety agencies (federal, state and local) use for tactical communications systems. The practical effect of the NTIA "narrowband" mandate was a requirement for federal agencies to replace their legacy radio systems. In 2000, as a cost avoidance measure, DOJ decided to build one system rather than replace the six separate systems in place at that time. A similar decision was made by officials at the Department of the Treasury. In August 2001, DOJ and Treasury officials began discussing a joint project. Initial agreement was reached on September 7, 2001, and the two departments signed the first memorandum of understanding for the IWN in November 2001. The Department of Homeland Security joined the partnership when it was created in March 2003.

The September 2001 terrorist attacks on New York and the Pentagon changed the focus of the IWN program from compliance with the NTIA narrowband mandate to improving the mission effectiveness of the communications system, of which interagency communications is a key aspect.

To date, the IWN program has developed a comprehensive set of functional and management requirements, conducted a technical assessment and market research into products and services that may provide the basis for the IWN system, and deployed several pilot systems to assess technology options and gain lessons learned on managing multi-agency systems. At present, the Department of Justice - on behalf of the three-department partnership - is conducting a procurement for the development, deployment and operation of a nationwide IWN system.

The IWN has been greatly influenced to date (and will continue to be influenced) by a number of lessons learned by DOJ, DHS and Treasury. The sources of these lessons include the experiences gained through operation of the existing individual agency systems, achievements from our 25 Cities Interoperability projects, and results of IWN pilots in Salt Lake City, Utah, San Diego, California and, most recently, Seattle, Washington. From these experiences and pilots, we have learned the following:

- **Deploying and operating effective communications systems is a complex endeavor. Public safety communications systems in general are complicated**

because they must be flexible in order to support the complex business processes of an agency that must address or respond to a wide range of non-routine situations. Multi-agency systems add a layer of complexity because each agency has its unique business processes or functional requirements. In addition, wireless communications systems have to be tailored to the geographic region being supported (this is a key distinguishing factor between wireless systems and all other IT). As a consequence, wireless communications systems such as IWN can employ common architectures and standards, but cannot be developed and deployed in a "cookie cutter" manner.

- **Interoperability must be addressed regionally or locally. While the federal government and its agencies can provide a national perspective to communications issues, interoperability, especially as it pertains to law enforcement, is essentially a "local" issue. Agents and officers usually need to communicate with compatriots from other agencies operating in the same general area. Further, because every region has a unique mix of government structures and communications resources in their "embedded base," no one solution can be appropriately imposed uniformly across the country. Instead, what is needed is a set of solution options that can be applied in varying combinations to address the specific communications needs of each region.**

- **A prerequisite for improving interagency communications is the development of successful partnerships among agencies in a particular region. As DOJ officials have worked to implement our interoperability initiatives, we have observed that good interoperability solutions start with good partnerships. To the credit of state and local government, we have witnessed across the country a tremendous collaborative spirit among law enforcement agencies. This collaborative spirit at the local level has served as the foundation for success. Indeed, where DOJ has been able to help improve interagency communications, we have simply enhanced the efforts that already were initiated locally. In the rare instances where we have encountered challenges achieving consensus across prospective partners, interoperability efforts have been slowed considerably.**

- **The collaborative projects have a multiplier effect. We have observed that the efforts to bring agencies together to work on a joint project have tended to foster better working relationships between agencies beyond the project itself. We have seen this specifically in the Seattle IWN pilot. Partnerships forged in developing that joint system have carried over into other operational areas among several of the federal agencies participating in the Seattle pilot.**

- **Joint systems such as the IWN provide a number of opportunities to achieve cost efficiencies. Examples of such efficiencies include increased purchasing**

power and reducing the aggregate quantity of communications infrastructure and overhead expenditures (e.g. site and circuit leases, infrastructure maintenance, and system administration personnel). Such projects also tend to be more open to leveraging facilities and services of other joint ventures. As an example, in the Seattle and Utah IWN pilots, we were able to obtain microwave connectivity services from the respective states. Doing so is saving the federal government substantial sums of money we would otherwise have paid for similar services.

DOJ, DHS and Treasury are also garnering lessons learned from Hurricane Katrina. Katrina had a devastating effect on most public safety communications systems in southern Louisiana and Mississippi. All of DOJ's legacy (non-IWN) systems in this region were either disabled or substantially damaged either as a result of the storm itself (wind and flood damage), or because the systems were dependent on local electricity, natural gas and telecommunications services that all were disabled during or shortly after the storm. Each of our components was able to re-establish emergency communications capabilities within days of the storm. However, based on this experience, the IWN program is reassessing requirements for how the IWN is built and deployed. We will also look at strategies for reducing dependence on utility services that are at risk of damage or failure during a storm – or a terrorist attack.

We believe the IWN program is an example of good government and best practices. IWN will provide management efficiencies through consolidation of departmental resources and the elimination of overlapping federal systems. As an example, by consolidating program management and system acquisition activities, the IWN program allows DOJ, DHS and Treasury to avoid a significant portion of the overhead costs the government would incur if each Department were to acquire services independently.

More importantly, we believe the IWN is an example of how government can achieve mission enhancement through the appropriate use of information technology. Specifically, the three IWN partners expect to realize several significant operational benefits from the consolidated system. The most significant of these will be communication services that are more secure, reliable and accessible to federal agents over a greater geographic area than what is available today to each individual agency. Further, the IWN will provide inherent interoperability between the agencies that are regular users of the system, because each agency will be operating on common infrastructure and technology and will have preprogrammed inter-operability "talk groups" established for cross-agency communication. The system also will have a number of mechanisms (e.g., gateways, system-to-system interconnections, etc.) by which IWN users can communicate with officials on other federal agency systems and those of the state and local law enforcement agencies, as well as mechanisms to reconstitute wireless communications systems through the use of ad hoc deployable systems.

A point worthy of note is that the shared nature of the IWN further facilitates inter-operability by bringing together DOJ, DHS and Treasury officials for the planning, development and operation of the system, thus conditioning the agencies to work together at a number of levels – from executive management to field office staff. Likewise, we anticipate that our efforts to incorporate inter-connectivity capabilities with other federal, state and local agency systems into the IWN will also facilitate building of inter-agency partnerships for mission purposes.

So what does IWN represent in the "big picture?" The Department of Justice believes that the capabilities of the IWN - and the collateral benefits of joint project ownership and management – will result in better communications within DOJ, DHS and Treasury, among the federal agencies broadly, and ultimately across the law enforcement and homeland security communities as a whole. Better communications will facilitate better mission coordination and collaboration, which in turn will make our law enforcement and homeland security personnel more effective in stopping crime and protecting the nation.

In closing, I want to assure you that DOJ recognizes that the federal law enforcement community is only a small piece of the overall public safety community. Nonetheless, we also understand that we have an obligation to lead by example. Toward that end, from this point forward, the communications systems we implement will be connected to those available to state, tribal and local agencies.

Further, the IWN is an example of the type of collaboration needed to improve interagency communications, and is representative of our commitment to achieve this objective across the country. These are core principles of the Integrated Wireless Network program.

Thank you for your time this afternoon. I will be happy to answer any questions you have.